In these Homes, the Department provides free lodging, boarding, clothing and bedding, casework and counselling services, medical care and recreational facilities, helpers to assist the bed-ridden or incapaciated inmates to perform their daily routine.

Interconnect Agreements

3455. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cellular operators have objected to the draft interconnect agreements of the Government;

(b) if so, whether this has resulted delay in roll-out of the cellular services in 17 regions of the country;

(c) if so, whether the Government have agreed to make the amendments in the above draft agreements;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be amended;

(e) whether all the concerned authorities have been consulted before taking any final decision; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The licences awarded to the operators of Cellular Mobile Telephone Service do not provide for any Interconnect Agreement. However, for the same of operational clarity, an Interconnect Agreement has been circulated amongst the operators of the service.

(b) to (d). Do not arise in view of (a).

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The draft interconnect agreement has been prepared after taking the views of concerned authorities in DOT from technical and financial angle and the view of Ministry of Law & Justice.

[Translation]

Setting up of Hostels for SC/ST Students

3456. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have not set up hostel for students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the last many years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether his Ministry has allocated funds under the said head for other States except Bihar;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by which the Union Government propose to allocate funds for Bihar under the said head?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) and (b). At present there is no Scheme under which the Union Government sets up hostels for students belonging to SCs/STs. However, the Ministry of Welfare has been implementing four Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Construction of boys and girls hostels for SCs/STs under which 50% Central share is given to the State Governments for construction of hostel buildings.

(c) and (d). Under these Schemes, the State-wise funds are not allocated. Proposals for release of 50% as Central share are sent by the State Governments for setting up hostels for SC/ST students after making a provision in the State Budget of the concerned State to the extent of 50% of the estimate of the construction of the hostels.

(e) So far no proposal has been received from the State Government of Bihar during the current financial year.

[English]

News Bulletins on Doordarshan

3457. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any norms for telecast of news on all the channels on Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the timings of news bulletins on Doordarshan language-wise, category-wise and channel-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Telecast of News on Doordarshan is governed by Programme Code and Advertisement Code of Doordarshan.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Details are enclosed as *Statement I* and *II*.